say: This befalls me through the divine disposition, by the permission of God, who, in all the adversities that He sends me, seeks md wills nought save my justification and salvation. And with this thought all bitter things will be rendered sweet." [1]

But, as the conversations with her divine Lover grew more frequent and familiar, and the revelations of the divine Beauty more full and overwhelming, so did the manifestations of the evil af the world the more insistently press themselves upon her. And, is ever with men and women of the Middle Ages, they took a personal and anthropomorphic form in the shape of temptations Df the devil. At first, indeed, Catherine had doubted whether the visitation that seemed celestial might not, in reality, have some such diabolical source. " But I will teach thee," said the Voice in her heart, <c how to distinguish My visions from the visions of the enemy. My vision begins with terror, but always, as it ^rows, gives greater confidence; it begins with some bitterness, but always groweth more sweet. In the vision of the enemy the contrary happens, for in the beginning it seems to bring some gladness, confidence, or sweetness, but, as it proceeds, fear and bitterness grow continuously in the soul of whoso beholds it. Even so are My ways different from his ways. The way of penance and of My commandments seemeth harsh and difficult in the beginning; but, the more one walks therein, the more does it become easy and sweet; whereas the way of the vices appears in the beginning right delightful, but in its course becomes ever more bitter and more ruinous. But I will give thee another sign, more infallible and more certain. Be assured that, since I am Truth, there ever results from My visions a greater knowledge of truth in the soul; and, because the knowledge of truth is most necessary to her about Me and about herself, that is, that she should know Me and know herself, from which knowledge it ever follows that she despises herself and honours Me, which is the proper office of humility, it is inevitable that from

[1] *Relations d'una dottrtna, o documento spirituals, scritta nelF anno del Signore* 1376, *il giorno setttmo del mese di Gennaio, da Fra Gughelmo Flete inglese.* Published by Gigh as an appendix to the *Dtalogo.* Cf. Letters 64 (124), 71 (358), 213 (163).